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INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 KHARTOUM 000262

DEPT FOR AF A A/S CARTER, AF/SPG, AF/E
NSC FOR MGAVIN AND HUDSON
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

SENSITIVE
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E.O. 12958: N/A
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SUBJECT: MALAKAL TENSIONS PERSIST AFTER TANGINIYA DEPARTS

REF: KHARTOUM 250

1. (U) This is an action request - see para. 13.

2. (SBU) SUMMARY: Erstwhile SSDF Commander and current SAF Major General Gabriel Tanginiya returned to Khartoum February 24 following his evacuation from Malakal via a chartered Antonov flight. GOSS Vice President Riek Machar, who arrived in Malakal that same evening in defiance of GOSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit's explicit directive to the contrary, facilitated the SAF commander's departure. Tanginiya's exit from Upper Nile State occurred despite the NCP Governor's endorsement of his arrest. The Government of Southern Sudan asserted that petroleum police at Paloich attacked the village's civilian population hours after the attack. UNMIS/Juba confirmed that fighting along the fringes of the Western Upper Nile oil fields was still occurring by 6:30PM that same day. Tensions remain high along the Renk-Malakal corridor today, and the cash-strapped Government of Southern Sudan has asked for international assistance in attending to the displaced. Tanginiya's departure has refocused the GOSS's attention on Machar's actions. Interlocutors predict Kiir-Machar "fireworks" at this weekend's Southern Sudan Defense Council Meeting. END SUMMARY.

TANGINIYA DEPARTS, AND MACHAR ALIENATES KIIR

3. (SBU) SPLA sources confirmed that an uninjured Tanginiya departed Malakal at 9PM on February 24 via a chartered Antonov flight. (SPLA Affairs Minister Nhial Deng Nhial corrected earlier erroneous reports that the pro-Khartoum Nuer commander has been wounded during the fighting.) ConGen Juba contacts in Malakal and Juba note that GOSS Vice President Riek Machar (also a Nuer) apparently facilitated Tanginiya's departure. UNMIS Chief David Gressly (strictly protect) told ConGen PolOff on February 24 that an exasperated GOSS President Kiir told him that Machar had violated his explicit instructions not to travel to Malakal, but that UNMIS should afford him "all diplomatic courtesy" and that Kiir would "handle him when he returns to Juba." (NOTE: Machar had been in Khartoum for another session of the joint NCP/SPLM Executive Committee talks on CPA implementation, and he remains in Malakal as of February 25. END NOTE.)

4. (SBU) Undersecretary for Regional Cooperation Cirinio Hiteng Ofuho opined to CG Juba on February 25 that Machar's arrival amidst the fighting made "absolutely no sense." Machar has no authority over the SPLA, and none of what was unfolding in Malakal fell under the purview of his community security duties (although Machar doubtless believes anything involving the Nuer has to do with him). The Undersecretary forecast Machar was due for a rocky reception upon his return to Juba at week's end, and likely would be the focus of debate during this week's GOSS Council of Ministers meeting and the Southern Sudan Defense Council (which he generally chairs). A one-on-one meeting between Kiir and Machar has already been arranged

for Saturday.

15. (SBU) Hiteng also noted that Machar arrived in Malakal with GNU State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs (and ICC-indictee) Ahmed Haroun. While Machar could conceivably have traveled with Haroun to guarantee the latter's security (an already provoked SPLA might have welcomed the opportunity to arrest Haroun in lieu of Tanginya), Haroun's travel southward reinforces GOSS/SPLM suspicions that the SAF/NCP was involved in Tanginiya's travel. SPLA sources, UNMIS/Malakal civil affairs staff, and members of the Sector Three Area Joint Military Committee continue to deny that Tanginiya was given "permission" to return to the South as previously reported in reftel. (Note: On the other hand, senior SPLM figures such as Deng Alor and Pagan Amun have always acknowledged that they appreciate working with Haroun, who they say is direct and reliable in negotiations and delivers on his promises more than some other members of the NCP. End note.)

16. (SBU) NCP negotiator Yehia Babiker told polchief February 25 the incident was a big disappointment for him and some others in the NCP, because the flight Tang took was the inaugural flight of the new Sudan Airways link between Khartoum, Malakal, and Juba. Now this incident has tarnished the image of the new flight, he said. Babiker did not deny that there were elements in the SAF that would like to provoke incidents such as the one in Malakal, and acknowledged the dangers of working with tenebrous figures such as General Tanginiya. However Babiker denied there was some sort of "conspiracy from the top" to attempt to destabilize the South so that the SAF would have to intervene. "You give us too much credit sometimes," claimed Babiker. Babiker participated in the Bashir-Taha-Kiir meetings in Juba February 24 and said the GNU President and Vice Presidents were still able to make some progress

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during discussions about a common ICC response, elections, and the Unity fund, but the meeting wound up being overtaken by events in Malakal. Babiker thought it was useful for Bashir to be in Juba during this incident, though, as Bashir demanded a response from the SAF/MOD, and the MOD arrived in Malakal on February 25 to assist in resolving the situation. Always the optimist, Babiker said it is unfortunate that incidents such as this one get in the way of progress in the SPLM-NCP relationship, and confirmed earlier reporting of ongoing SPLM-NCP negotiations on elections and the referendum law (septel).

UNMIS VIEWS SAF AS THE CULPRIT, GOSS AGREES

17. (SBU) On February 24, UNMIS/Juba Civil Affairs Deputy Director Diane De Guzman emphasized po ConGen PoLoff 4hat\$Talginiy remaYn ` -
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